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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6398
INFO RUCNKOR/KOREA COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUACAAA/COMUSKOREA INTEL SEOUL KOR PRIORITY
RHMFISS/COMUSKOREA J5 SEOUL KOR PRIORITY
RHMFISS/COMUSFK SEOUL KOR PRIORITY
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 001904

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/24/2029
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [ABLD](#) [MARR](#) [KS](#) [KN](#) [AF](#) [IR](#) [BM](#)
SUBJECT: PDAS DONOVAN'S MEETING WITH ROK DFM LEE YONG-JOON

Classified By: EAP PDAS JOE DONOVAN. Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

SUMMARY

¶1. (C) In a December 2 meeting with visiting EAP PDAS Joe Donovan, ROK Deputy Foreign Minister Lee Yong-joon requested an appointment with SRAP Holbrooke in Washington later this month to discuss preparations for establishment of a ROK PRT in Parwan, Afghanistan and urged that the United States maintain its PRT in Parwan. Lee expressed hope that next year's planned 2 2 meeting (septel) be held in Seoul and evinced concern about growing ties between Burma and North Korea. He said the new American Embassy compound issue was "almost solved" and expressed satisfaction that construction for the Yongsan Relocation Project was "back on track." Donovan warned against new energy deals with Iran, which would undermine P5 1 efforts; Lee expressed support for American policy toward Iran but asserted Seoul could not force its companies to forego legal deals. END SUMMARY.

AFGHANISTAN

¶2. (C) EAP Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Joe Donovan met with Republic of Korea (ROK) Deputy Foreign Minister Lee Yong-joon on December 2 for 50 minutes. DFM Lee noted that the continued improvement in US-ROK relations had provided President Lee Myung-bak's administration with political leeway to make two significant policy decisions this year: joining the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) and returning to Afghanistan. PDAS Donovan thanked the ROKG for its planned contribution in Afghanistan and urged them to move forward expeditiously with announcing and disbursing its pledge to the Afghan National Army. DFM Lee said he would travel to Brussels this week to attend NATO meetings on Afghanistan.

¶3. (C) DFM Lee also intends to visit Washington later this month and would like to meet with SRAP Holbrook to discuss US and ROK joint participation in Parwan Province. Lee said he understood that there were three potential scenarios for US PRT participation in Parwan: 1) a joint US-ROK PRT; 2) separate US and ROK PRTs; or 3) the US would quit Parwan and move its PRT to another region. DFM Lee urged that the solution be either a joint PRT or two PRTs in Parwan. He argued that the joint PRT would make a good showcase for the US-ROK "global strategic alliance." DFM Lee said the national Assembly will consider the Afghan support bill early next week.

14. (C) DFM Lee said the ROKG welcomed agreement on the 2 plus 2 meeting of the Secretaries of State and Defense with the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defense, adding that the ROK had pursued such a meeting since the early 1990's. Seoul hoped to arrange the meeting as early as possible and would prefer to host the meeting in Seoul. DFM Lee added that FM Yu would like to have a "strategic dialogue" with Secretary Clinton on the margins of the 2 plus 2 Ministerial.

IRAN

15. (C) PDAS Donovan told DFM Lee that now is not the time for Korean companies to pursue "business as usual" with Iran. New energy deals with Iran send the wrong message and undermine the P5 1 proposal to offer enhanced engagement as an inducement for Iranian compliance. DFM Lee said the ROKG fully understands the position of the USG and the international community. As President Lee recently told President Obama, the ROK agrees with the US position on Iran but Seoul was in a difficult position. The ROKG has met with Korean companies to discourage them from pursuing contracts with Iran and has cautioned them that they might face U.S. or future international sanctions for dealing with Iran. But Korea is a market-based economy and while the government cannot persuade companies not to deal with Iran it cannot enforce "non-sanctions." The response from the Korean companies had been that they are not pursuing investments in Iran like other countries' companies but are completing turnkey construction projects. They claimed that Chinese, French, Italian or Turkish companies would take these contracts if the Korean companies did not.

BURMA

16. (C) DFM Lee said that the ROKG has had no high level contact with Burma since UN sanctions were imposed. Earlier this year, however, the ROKG had opened Deputy Foreign Minister-level meetings to discuss the case of fifteen North Korean refugees seeking asylum in Burma. Seoul was concerned that the Burma-DPRK relationship was strengthening daily and Burmese purchases of North Korean weapons continued to increase. Also of concern were the growing military ties between Burma and North Korea. PDAS Donovan said Washington was also concerned about the Burma-North Korea relationship.

BASE RELOCATION ISSUES

17. (C) PDAS Donovan raised the Yongsan Relocation Project (YRP) with DFM Lee and asked for his assessment of the current delay in construction. DFM Lee said he was aware that there were some sensitivities regarding construction of SCIFs and other sensitive items at Camp Humphreys but that he believed USFK Commanding GEN Walter Sharp and Minister of Defense Kim Tae-young had the project back on track. Donovan urged the ROKG to move forward as quickly as possible with YRP.

NEW EMBASSY CONSTRUCTION

18. (C) Lee said the New Embassy Compound was "almost solved." MOFAT was still trying to iron out some details between the Seoul City Administration and the Ministry of Construction but was confident that it would be resolved soon. In order to avoid construction delays, DFM Lee requested Donovan's assistance to speed up the State Department's internal bureaucratic process once the agreement is finalized.
STEPHENS